

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 19, 2009

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department Of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Thank you for the hard work you are doing to help our dairy farmers during this difficult economic time. We have growing concerns about the dairy farmers who continue to struggle while waiting for funds that have already been appropriated by Congress.

The Department of Agriculture and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (PL 111-80) included \$350 million to help the dairy industry. The funds included \$60 million meant for purchasing cheese and other dairy products for food banks and nutrition programs, and \$290 million which is supposed to be used for a direct payment to dairy producers.

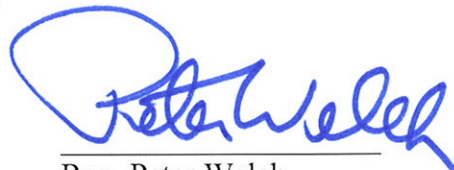
It is important that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) move quickly to get the \$290 million of these funds into the hands of our dairy producers. Many dairy producers are struggling to stay open everyday, and we are concerned that with only a little more than a month left in 2009, time is running out for dairy producers to benefit from these funds this year.

We understand that the USDA is determining the best method for a direct payment of the \$290 million, and we appreciate all the work that has been done for dairy farmers. We respectfully request that the USDA find an efficient and effective method to get dairy producers these funds before the end of 2009.

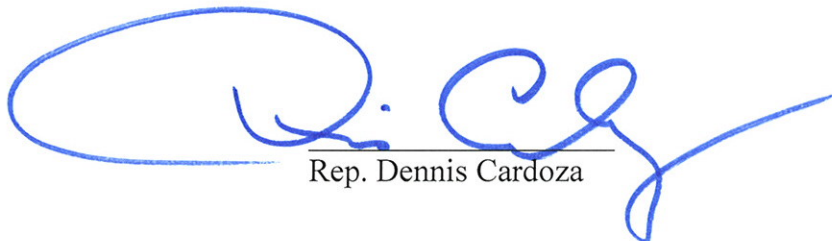
Sincerely,



Rep. Paul W. Hodes



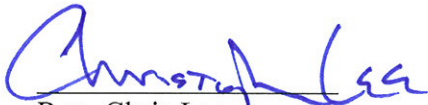
Rep. Peter Welch



Rep. Dennis Cardoza



Rep. Roscoe Bartlett


Rep. Chris Lee


Rep. Michael Arcuri


Rep. Scott Murphy


Rep. Louise Slaughter


Rep. Carol Shea-Porter


Rep. Eric Massa